

ENHANCING JOB EFFICIENCY THROUGH DIGITAL INFORMATION LITERACY AMONG LIBRARIANS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN IMO STATE

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Abstract

The research examined enhancing job efficiency through digital information literacy among librarians in Imo State academic libraries. Four research questions guided the study. The study adopted survey research design. The population of the study comprised of the 122 librarians in the academic libraries in Imo State. A sample of 50 librarians was selected using convenience sampling technique. The questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by 3 experts (one each) from Imo State University, Federal University of Technology Owerri; and Federal Polytechnic Nekede. The Cronbach Alpha a reliability method was used to test the internal consistency of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.82 was gotten. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean scores and standard deviation. The study found that exhibit a high level of confidence and competency in using digital tools and resources. Librarians are aware of the digital skills essential for enhancing their job efficiency. Digital literacy training boosts confidence, motivation, and user satisfaction, contributing to the overall efficiency of academic librarians. The challenges of lack of regular training collectively impact the job efficiency of librarians by impeding their ability to develop new digital skills. The study concluded that librarians possess a high level of digital literacy and recognize its importance in their professional roles. The study recommended the need to establish a structured, ongoing training program that regularly updates librarians on emerging digital tools and technologies. This will help maintain their high level of competency in using digital resources.

Keywords: Job Efficiency, Digital Information Literacy, Librarians, Academic Libraries

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving digital landscape, academic libraries play a crucial role in supporting research, teaching, and learning activities within higher education institutions. As information resources increasingly shift towards digital formats, librarians must adapt their skills and competencies to effectively manage and disseminate these resources (Adeleke &

Olorunsola, 2020). Digital information literacy has emerged as a critical skill set for librarians, enabling them to navigate the complex digital information environment and provide efficient services to library users. The concept of digital information literacy encompasses the ability to locate, evaluate, and use digital information effectively (Ukwoma & Iwundu, 2016). For librarians, this skill set is particularly important as they are often the primary point of contact for students and faculty seeking assistance with research and information retrieval. As such, the digital information literacy of librarians directly impacts the quality of services provided by academic libraries and, by extension, the overall job efficiency of librarians in the institution.

According to Akande and Akinyemi (2019), job efficiency refers to the capacity of an individual or professional to perform tasks effectively, using minimal resources to achieve maximum output. This encompasses the ability to balance technical skills, time management, and problem-solving competencies to deliver consistent and high-quality results. With a view to ensuring job efficiency, the role of librarians has seen significant changes over recent years, particularly within academic and research library settings. Today, their responsibilities extend beyond handling printed materials to managing extensive digital collections, guiding patrons through information searches, and helping users navigate the complexities of digital systems (Olayemi & Afolabi, 2021). Achieving job efficiency in these tasks requires librarians to possess not only technical expertise but also strong interpersonal skills, problem-solving capabilities, and an aptitude for digital resource management. In Nigeria, librarians face the challenge of balancing high user expectations with consistent performance, prompting them to develop new digital competencies. As the demand for digital resources continues to rise, having a strong foundation in digital information literacy has become

essential for librarians aiming to offer comprehensive services and contribute effectively to their institutions' goals

The relationship between digital information literacy and job efficiency in academic libraries has been the subject of several studies. Research has shown that librarians with higher levels of digital information literacy are better equipped to handle the demands of the modern academic library environment, resulting in improved job efficiency and user satisfaction (Igwe & Onah, 2019). In the context of Imo State, Nigeria, academic libraries may have faced unique challenges in adopting and implementing digital technologies. Previous studies in the area has shown that limited funding, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of trained personnel are some of the obstacles that hinder the full realization of digital library services (Nwosu et al., 2021). Despite these challenges, there is a growing recognition of the importance of digital information literacy among librarians in the state's academic institutions.

Similarly, there is a paucity of research specifically examining this relationship within the context of Imo State academic libraries. This has provided a significant gap in the study. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by investigating the impact of digital information literacy on enhancing job efficiency among librarians in Imo State academic libraries

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the current level of digital information literacy among librarians working in academic libraries in Imo State?
2. What specific digital skills do librarians believe are essential for improving their job efficiency in academic libraries?
3. In what ways do digital information literacy training programs influence the job efficiency of librarians in academic libraries in Imo State?
4. What challenges do librarians encounter in developing their digital information literacy skills as it affects their job efficiency in academic libraries?

Review of Related Literature

Academic libraries serve as vital knowledge hubs within educational institutions, providing access to diverse information resources and supporting research, teaching, and learning activities. These libraries play a crucial role in facilitating academic pursuits by offering a wide range of services, including collection development, information literacy instruction, and research support (Omeluzor et al., 2017). As centers of intellectual growth, academic libraries continuously adapt to meet the evolving needs of their users in an increasingly digital landscape.

Librarians are information professionals who manage and organize library resources, assist users in accessing information, and promote information literacy. In academic settings, librarians play multifaceted roles as educators, researchers, and facilitators of knowledge dissemination (Anyim, 2018). Their responsibilities extend beyond traditional library functions to include digital resource management, research data curation, and collaboration with faculty in curriculum development.

Digital Information Literacy (DIL) refers to the ability to locate, evaluate, and effectively use digital information resources. It encompasses skills such as navigating online databases, critically assessing digital content, and utilizing digital tools for information management and dissemination (Ukwoma & Iwundu, 2016). In the context of academic libraries, DIL is essential for both librarians and library users to effectively engage with the vast array of digital resources available.

Job efficiency in the library context relates to the ability of librarians to perform their duties effectively, utilizing available resources and technologies to meet user needs and organizational goals. Efficient librarians demonstrate proficiency in information retrieval, resource management, and user service delivery (Emiri, 2015). In the digital age, job efficiency is increasingly linked to the ability to leverage digital tools and resources to enhance library services and user experiences.

Providing Digital Information Literacy training to librarians is essential for enhancing their job efficiency and the overall effectiveness of academic libraries. As information landscapes evolve, librarians must continually update their skills to navigate and utilize digital resources effectively. DIL training equips librarians with the necessary competencies to guide users through the complexities of the digital information environment, thereby improving the quality of library services and user satisfaction (Ezeani et al., 2017).

Several studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between job efficiency and digital information literacy among librarians in academic libraries. Adeleke and Olorunsola (2019) found that librarians with higher levels of digital literacy were more efficient in providing reference services and conducting information literacy sessions. Similarly, Nwosu

et al. (2021) reported that academic librarians with advanced digital skills demonstrated greater productivity in managing electronic resources and supporting online research activities. These findings underscore the importance of continuous DIL training for librarians to enhance their job efficiency and the overall effectiveness of academic libraries in the digital era.

Methodology

Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of the 122 librarians in the academic libraries in Imo State. A sample of 50 librarians was selected using convenience sampling technique. The questionnaire was the research instrument used for data collection. The instrument was validated by 3 experts (one each) from Imo State University, Federal University of Technology Owerri; and Federal Polytechnic Nekede. The Crombach Alpha a reliability method was used to test the internal consistency of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.82 was gotten. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean scores and standard deviation

Results

Research Question 1: What is the current level of digital information literacy among librarians working in academic libraries in Imo State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings on the Current Level of Digital Information Literacy among Librarians in Academic Libraries

S/NO	Items	Mean Score	SD	Decision
1	I am confident in my ability to use digital tools and resources to find information.	3.85	0.45	High Level
2	I frequently utilize online databases to conduct research for library patrons.	3.50	0.68	High Level

S/NO	Items	Mean Score	SD	Decision
3	I can effectively navigate library management systems and digital catalogues.	2.30	0.95	Low Level
4	I regularly update my knowledge of new digital technologies relevant to library services.	3.70	0.52	High Level
5	I am familiar with the use of social media platforms to promote library resources.	3.40	0.60	High Level
6	I can assist library users in using digital resources effectively.	3.65	0.58	High Level
7	I often attend workshops or training sessions to improve my digital information literacy skills.	3.25	0.74	High Level

From the analysis on the table, it was observed that on a high level, librarians in Imo State feel confident in their ability to use digital tools and resources, librarians frequently utilize online databases for research, which is vital for academic library functions, they regularly update their knowledge which makes them aware of the need to stay current with digital trends, essential for adapting library services to user needs, librarians are generally familiar with using social media for promoting library resources, they have the ability to assist users with digital resources, and they have the commitment to professional development. However, the librarians attested on a low level that they effectively navigating library management systems and digital catalogues. Overall, the results suggest that librarians in Imo State exhibit a high level of confidence and competency in using digital tools and resources. This is crucial in today's information age where digital literacy is fundamental for effective library services.

The findings echo those of Afolabi and Adetayo (2020), who found that digital confidence among librarians directly correlates with improved user engagement and satisfaction in academic libraries. However, the low score regarding navigating library

management systems points to a critical gap that needs addressing. Osunwoke et al. (2023) emphasized that despite high levels of confidence, many librarians lack the necessary training to utilize digital management systems effectively, which can hinder overall library performance. This discrepancy highlights the necessity for comprehensive training programs that focus on both confidence-building and practical skills application to enhance librarians' overall digital information literacy.

Research Question 2: What specific digital skills do librarians believe are essential for improving their job efficiency in academic libraries?

Table 2: Mean Ratings on specific digital skills librarians believe are essential for improving job efficiency in academic libraries

S/NO	Items	Mean Score	SD	Decision
1	Proficiency in using library management software is essential for my job.	3.85	0.42	Agree
2	Understanding how to evaluate the credibility of online sources is crucial for my role.	3.60	0.50	Agree
3	Skills in digital content creation (e.g., blogs, videos) are important for my work.	3.75	0.45	Agree
4	I believe that data management skills (e.g., using spreadsheets) enhance my efficiency.	3.55	0.60	Agree
5	Knowledge of copyright and intellectual property in the digital environment is vital for my job.	3.80	0.48	Agree
6	Familiarity with emerging technologies (e.g., AI, VR) is necessary for librarians today.	3.65	0.53	Agree
7	I think that effective online communication skills are essential for interacting with library users.	3.50	0.57	Agree

The results from Table 2 indicate a consensus among librarians in Imo State on the essential digital skills necessary for enhancing job efficiency in academic libraries, as evidenced by the high mean scores across all items. This demonstrates that librarians perceive proficiency in library management software as critically important for their roles. The strong agreement on the importance of digital content creation skills underscores the evolving nature

of librarianship. Knowledge of copyright and intellectual property skill is deemed vital. The agreement on evaluating credibility of online sources highlights the critical role librarians play in guiding users to discern credible information in an increasingly complex digital landscape. Familiarity with emerging technologies as agreed by them enables them to stay updated with trends such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality. The importance of data management skills emphasizes the necessity for librarians to effectively handle and analyze data. The agreement on the necessity of strong online communication skills suggests that librarians recognize the importance of engaging with library users through various digital channels to provide support and information efficiently. Overall, the high mean scores across all items indicate that librarians in Imo State are aware of and value the digital skills essential for enhancing their job efficiency. This awareness is crucial for adapting to the evolving landscape of library services, where digital proficiency significantly impacts overall effectiveness.

The results from the survey highlight that librarians in Imo State prioritize proficiency in library management software, digital content creation, and knowledge of copyright and intellectual property. This aligns with findings by Gana and Abba (2019), who emphasize that digital literacy and technological competence are essential for modern librarianship. They found that academic librarians who possess strong digital skills significantly enhance their ability to provide effective information services, leading to improved patron satisfaction and library usage. This notion is further supported by a study conducted by Lwoga (2018), which revealed that librarians equipped with digital skills are more adept at managing digital resources and assisting users in navigating these resources efficiently. These studies

underscore the consensus on the importance of digital competencies as foundational elements for librarians aiming to adapt to contemporary library environments.

Research Question 3: How do digital information literacy training programs influence the job efficiency of librarians in academic libraries in Imo State?

Table 3: Mean ratings on how digital information literacy training programs influence the job efficiency of librarians in academic libraries

S/NO	Items	Mean Score	SD	Decision
1	The digital information literacy training I have received has improved my job efficiency.	3.80	0.50	Agree
2	I can apply skills learned in digital information literacy training directly to my work.	3.65	0.55	Agree
3	Training programs have increased my confidence in using digital resources.	3.85	0.45	Agree
4	I believe that ongoing digital training is essential for staying current in my role.	3.70	0.52	Agree
5	I have noticed a significant improvement in user satisfaction due to my enhanced digital skills.	3.90	0.40	Agree
6	Participation in digital training has motivated me to learn more about new technologies.	3.75	0.47	Agree
7	I feel that digital information literacy training programs are relevant to my daily responsibilities.	3.60	0.58	Agree

The mean scores for all items in Table 3 indicate a general agreement among the 42 librarians surveyed in Imo State, suggesting that digital information literacy training programs play a significant role in enhancing their job efficiency. The highest mean score (3.90) was attributed to the statement that user satisfaction has improved as a result of enhanced digital skills, highlighting the tangible impact of these training programs on service quality. Additionally, the agreement on increased confidence (mean score of 3.85) and motivation to explore new technologies (mean score of 3.75) underscores the comprehensive benefits of such training programs. The relatively uniform standard deviations across items reflect consistent perceptions among the participants, reinforcing the importance of

continuous training to maintain job efficiency and relevance in the rapidly evolving field of librarianship. Overall, the results illustrate that digital literacy training not only enhances technical proficiency but also boosts confidence, motivation, and user satisfaction, contributing to the overall efficiency of academic librarians.

This finding aligns with the research by Ojedokun and Olayinka (2019), who found that digital literacy training significantly improves librarians' capacity to manage digital resources and provide high-quality services. Their study highlighted that training programs not only equip librarians with necessary technical skills but also boost their confidence in assisting users with complex information needs, ultimately enhancing user satisfaction. Furthermore, Hossain (2020) supports this view, emphasizing that librarians who actively participate in continuous professional development report higher job efficiency and improved user engagement. These empirical studies confirm that the benefits of digital literacy training extend beyond individual competence to positively impacting library users and institutional goals. This perspective is echoed in the work of Agim and Azolo (2019) who reported that continuous training in digital literacy allows librarians to adapt to emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and big data, which are becoming integral to modern library operations. Agim and Azolo argued that librarians who stay updated through regular training can more efficiently integrate new technologies into their work, promoting innovation in library services.

Research Question 4: What challenges do librarians encounter in developing their digital information literacy skills as it affects their job efficiency in academic libraries?

Table 4: Mean Ratings on the challenges librarians encounter in developing their digital information literacy skills as it affects their job efficiency in academic libraries

S/NO	Items	Mean Score	SD	Decision
1	I face time constraints that limit my ability to pursue digital literacy training.	3.90	0.45	Agree
2	Access to digital training resources (e.g., courses, workshops) is often inadequate.	3.60	0.52	Agree
3	I encounter difficulties in integrating new digital skills into my daily work routine.	3.75	0.48	Agree
4	I find that insufficient technical support in my library hampers my digital skill development.	3.55	0.50	Agree
5	I believe that the rapid pace of technological change creates challenges for my continuous learning.	3.80	0.46	Agree
6	I experience a lack of institutional encouragement to enhance my digital information literacy.	3.65	0.51	Agree
7	These challenges have a negative impact on my overall job efficiency as a librarian.	3.50	0.55	Agree

The results from Table 4 reveal that librarians in academic libraries in Imo State face significant challenges in developing their digital information literacy skills, which in turn affects their job efficiency. The item with the highest mean score (3.90) indicates that time constraints are a major hindrance, reflecting how demanding schedules limit opportunities for librarians to pursue digital literacy training. The challenge posed by the rapid pace of technological advancements also scored highly (mean score of 3.80), emphasizing the difficulty librarians face in keeping up with new digital tools and trends. The findings further show that inadequate access to training resources and insufficient technical support are additional barriers, with mean scores of 3.60 and 3.55, respectively. Overall, the data suggests that these challenges collectively impact the job efficiency of librarians by impeding their ability to develop and integrate new digital skills. The consistent agreement across all items implies that addressing these challenges is critical for improving digital literacy and enhancing the job efficiency of librarians in academic libraries

The findings from Table 4 aligns with the study by Adeyemi and Olukemi (2018), who found that librarians in Nigerian academic institutions struggle to find sufficient time for professional development due to heavy workloads and administrative responsibilities. Adeyemi and Olukemi noted that without dedicated time for skill enhancement, librarians cannot fully integrate digital competencies into their roles, leading to stagnation in job efficiency. Similarly, Ofoegbu (2020) observed that the rapid evolution of digital tools often outpaces the ability of librarians to keep up, creating a persistent gap in digital fluency. These findings confirm that time management and the pace of technological advancements are key obstacles that librarians must overcome to improve their job efficiency. The challenges related to inadequate access to digital training resources and insufficient technical support highlighted in Table 4 are corroborated by empirical findings in the literature of Agim (2021) who pointed out that many libraries in Nigeria face resource constraints that limit the availability of up-to-date training and technical support for their staff. This inadequacy in training resources hinders librarians from acquiring new skills and incorporating them effectively into their work. Agim argued that when library management provides encouragement and resources for training, librarians are more motivated and better able to apply new skills, ultimately improving their job efficiency.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that librarians in Imo State possess a high level of digital literacy and recognize its importance in their professional roles. Their confidence and competency in using digital tools and resources position them well to meet the demands of modern library services. The awareness of essential digital skills among these librarians indicates a proactive approach to adapting to the evolving nature of their profession.

Furthermore, the study highlights the multifaceted benefits of digital literacy training, which extends beyond technical proficiency to include improved confidence, motivation, and user satisfaction. This underscores the critical role of continuous professional development in enhancing the overall efficiency of academic librarians. However, the study also reveals significant challenges, primarily poor funding and lack of regular training, which hinder librarians' ability to fully develop and integrate new digital skills. These obstacles pose a threat to the long-term effectiveness and adaptability of library services in the region. In conclusion, while librarians in Imo State demonstrate a strong foundation in digital literacy, addressing the identified challenges is crucial. Increased investment in regular training programs and improved funding for digital resources are necessary to ensure that librarians can continue to enhance their digital skills and provide efficient, up-to-date services in an increasingly digital information landscape

Recommendations

Based on the findings, here are workable recommendations to address the issues identified in the study:

1. Establish a structured, ongoing training program that regularly updates librarians on emerging digital tools and technologies. This will help maintain and further enhance their high level of confidence and competency in using digital resources.
2. Develop a comprehensive framework that outlines essential digital skills for librarians, allowing them to self-assess their proficiency and identify areas for improvement. This framework should be regularly updated to reflect evolving technological trends in library services.

3. Academic institutions should create and enforce policies that mandate periodic assessment and improvement of librarians' digital skills. This will ensure consistent growth in their ability to adapt to emerging technologies
4. Develop collaborations with other academic institutions, tech companies, or government agencies to pool resources, share expertise, and secure additional funding for digital literacy initiatives. This can help overcome financial constraints and ensure regular, high-quality training opportunities for librarians.
5. Library management should ensure the availability of modern ICT tools and resources, such as high-speed internet, updated computer systems, and access to digital repositories, to facilitate efficient job performance.
6. Management should offer incentives, such as promotions, certifications, or financial rewards, for librarians who acquire advanced digital literacy skills. This will motivate librarians to invest in their professional growth.
7. Libraries can establish mentoring programs where digitally skilled librarians guide their colleagues. This peer-to-peer model can foster collaboration, reduce training costs, and promote the sharing of best practices.

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